Delete the paragraph beginning at page 26, line 1, and ending at page 26, line 18, and replace with the following:

Fig. 11 shows an example of the calculation for the degree of similarity. In this example, the distance between each key image and the target image is calculated based on the values of feature quantity 2 and feature quantity 3 selected as the common features and the degree of similarity is obtained based on the calculated distances. The values shown in Fig. 11 are obtained from the following equations (1) to (3).

Difference between features = | (key image feature quantity)-(target image feature quantity) | (1)

Distance = square root of {the sum of (each feature quantity difference)^2} (2)

Degree of similarity = 1.0/distance (3)

Delete the paragraph beginning at page 26, line 19, and ending at page 27, line 7, and replace with the following:

According to a second embodiment, the degree of similarity between a target image and key images is calculated for each of the key images based on features of all kinds. From the degrees of similarity calculated for each key image, the highest degree of similarity is then selected as the degree of similarity of the target image to the corresponding key image. In this case, images similar to at least one of the plural key images are searched. That is, the image search is performed under an OR logic condition and, accordingly, it becomes possible to broaden the ranges of searching conditions by increasing the number of key images. The second embodiment performs a processing shown in Fig. 12 and Fig. 13 instead of Figs. 6 and 7 of the first embodiment.

Delete the paragraph beginning at page 27, line 8, and ending at page 27, line 13, and replace with the following:

3